



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Solid Waste Division

April 2005

Class Act

School Recycling Program Newsletter

Teaching about Household Hazardous Products

High School Students Learn, Then Teach HHW Lessons

Last fall, Amy Malter's class at John Marshall Alternative School and Toni Bukowski's class at Ballard High School (Seattle) took part in a six-week program that combined classroom lessons on household hazardous waste (HHW) with two field trips and an outreach project in which students designed and taught a lesson to an elementary school classroom.

The King County Solid Waste Division funds the program, which is facilitated by Darcy Batura, an educator with the WSU King County Extension Office. Darcy uses the Hazards on the Homefront lesson guide to provide these students with a comprehensive and hands-on learning experience. One of the program's strengths is that it makes household hazardous waste topics relevant to the lives of the teens involved. Through this program, students learn how to

- ◆ identify hazardous household products by reading labels.
- ◆ recognize the hazards to the environment and human health posed by these products.
- ◆ safely dispose of hazardous products.
- ◆ use safer substitutes.
- ◆ examine their own choices as consumers.

A field trip to a household hazardous waste collection site and a watershed/forest tour enhance the classroom learning. The final project is for student teams to take one of the lessons learned and present it to a local fourth, fifth, or sixth grade classroom.



A John Marshall student teaches elementary students how to read product labels

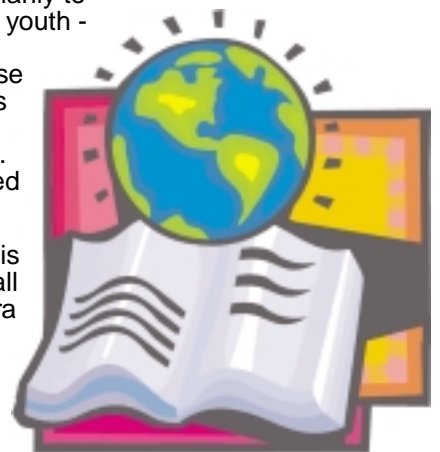
Over the past three years, this program has been conducted at four different schools, reaching over 200 high school students who in turn have shared their knowledge with almost a thousand elementary school students. The expectation that students teach the material to younger students motivates them to quickly master it and instills them with a sense of pride and accomplishment. Through the community service project, several students discovered a talent for teaching and have continued to volunteer with younger students. Another outcome of this project is that several teachers have adopted the program lessons as an annual component of their science classes.



John Marshall students teach HHW to students at Green Lake Elementary School in Seattle.

The program was designed primarily to introduce HHW issues to at-risk youth - students from economically disadvantaged communities, those whose academic performance is below average, or those with a history of social disengagement. However, not all participants need fit these categories.

If you are interested in having this program in your classroom for fall 2005, please contact Darcy Batura at 206-205-3130 or darcy.batura@metrokc.gov.





Brookside Elementary Teacher Receives Grant to Incorporate the Study of Household Hazardous Waste into the Foss Environments Kit

Patricia Shirley, fifth grade teacher at Brookside Elementary, took the Hazards on the Homefront Teacher Workshop in October 2004. Realizing that household hazardous waste would be a good topic to integrate into the Foss Kit on the environment that she was planning to use this winter, Ms. Shirley applied for a received a grant from the King County Solid Waste Division to fund her efforts. She has been creating lab extensions to integrate the topic of household hazardous products into lessons on the scientific method and on testing a variable in designing an experiment.

Next Hazards on the Homefront Teacher Training: August 17, 2005

For more information, visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/education/teacherworkshops.asp> or call 206-583-0655.

The Local Hazardous Waste Management Program Has Updated Its Website

Sign up for a classroom presentation, check out the calendar of events, and find the latest information on what makes a product hazardous, how to dispose of it, and more. Visit www.govlink.org/hazwaste.

Protect Children from Contaminated Soil

Public Health—Seattle & King County has a new campaign to educate King County residents about the potential contamination of soil with arsenic or lead as a result of smokestack emissions from the Asarco Smelter in Tacoma. While the potentially contaminated soil is not a health emergency, Public Health recommends that communities closest to the smelter such as south Vashon, Highline, Federal Way, and the Kent valley take simple precautions as a preventative measure. These entail

- ◆ washing hands before eating.
- ◆ keeping dust under control with frequent damp mopping.
- ◆ removing shoes before entering the home.
- ◆ keeping children off of bare patches of soil.

For more information or to receive printed brochures, contact 206-296-4692 or visit www.metrokc.gov/health/tsp/arseniclead.htm. Materials are available in Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Russian.

Recycling Assistance Available from King County Solid Waste Division

In 2004, King County's School Recycling and Waste Reduction Assistance Program and Green Schools Program helped **53 schools** to start or improve recycling programs. Of the 53 schools:

- ◆ 20 schools started to recycle plastic bottles and aluminum cans
- ◆ 17 schools set up printer cartridge recycling programs
- ◆ 10 schools initiated fluorescent bulb recycling.

Assistance includes: (1) site visits to assess solid waste management and recycling practices; (2) written recommendations for improvement; (3) meeting with the principal and custodian to decide which changes to make and when and how to make them; (4) provision of recycling containers, signs and other necessary equipment/supplies; and (5) hands-on help to start recycling programs, add new materials to existing programs, and promote the recycling program to students and staff.

For more information, check out the web site:

<http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/education/assistance.asp>. Please have your school's principal or custodian contact Dale Alekel (206-296-8457; dale.alekel@metrokc.gov) to request assistance with the school's recycling program.



Students at Issaquah Valley Elementary Erika Eisenman, Emma Watanabe, and Zoe Lipitz place empty milk cartons in recycling containers in the school cafeteria.

Grants Available

Grants are available for projects related to watershed protection, habitat restoration, salmon conservation and other environmental projects. Visit <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/pi/grants.htm> for details.

Nowhere Land

By Brad Cleveland, 5th grade
Black Diamond Elementary

*Nowhere land is not grand,
It is just a place of only sand.
Once in a while you'll find a pile,
Of dried up old crocodiles.
Some say it was once a beautiful place,
Not just an old place of waste.
No one thought this place could be,
The most beautiful place you see.
Now it is fallen down trees,
Smashed up leaves,
And a bunch of broken hearted
Bumble bees.
For their homes were just destroyed.*

*Now the forest is all gone,
You can't even see a single pond,
Now the forest is gone.
Much, much life has run away,
Probably run to where they'll stay.
Till the day when the machinery comes,
To destroy everything and it's all done.*

*But something stands out from all
The wreckage,
It seems to be a single message.
A single tree, not even with a single match,
Stands alone with a scratch.
Around lies the terror of the Forest.
For miles around not a sound,
It seems everything has gone Underground.
The little tree, with not even a match
Shouts out in a sad, sad voice,
Save us now, for-it's-your-choice!*



Earth Day is Every Day to the Students

Evergreen Students Hold Conservation Carnival

Fourth and fifth grade students at the Evergreen School (Shoreline) organized a Conservation Carnival for the K-3 students. Students researched facts and figures and created booths about water and energy conservation, recycling, and reuse. The younger students participated in games and displays at each booth. The Evergreen School is a Green School and organized the carnival as part of their Green Schools program goals.

Black Diamond Targets Junk Mail

Linda Reiter's fifth grade Green Team at Black Diamond (Enumclaw) collected unsolicited junk mail from school staff. They then sorted all of it into like piles, counted the number and wrote letters to the companies explaining that the staff just throws this stuff away - most often unopened. They asked them to send only one copy if they must, which would be displayed on the staff bulletin board. Students also put on a play called the Throwaway Three which was taped and played over the school network.



Callie Weber puts an aluminum can in the recycling container

Roots and Shoots Club Initiates Lunchroom Recycling

Students and parents at Peter Kirk Elementary (Lake Washington) have started lunchroom recycling at their school. Students can now recycle cans, bottles, and paper, and are composting their milk cartons through Waste Management's residential yard waste collection program. Club members have been learning about recycling through field trips and activities and have taken the lead in educating the rest of the student body about the program.

Tolt Middle School Students Teach Elementary Buddies

Cathy Buck's seventh grade Green Team at Tolt Middle School volunteered to learn about worm bins and recycling in order to teach first and third grade students at Carnation Elementary. Meeting after school each week, students split into two groups, one focused on worm bin composting, the other on recycling. With the assistance of Green Team specialists, who helped them prepare their presentations, each group taught their material to the elementary students. On another day, the 19 Green Team members then taught the same material to the rest of the seventh graders.



Tolt Middle School Green Team members teach about recycling to students at Carnation Elementary.



Low Waste Lunch Day at Sunset Elementary

On March 25, students at Sunset Elementary (Bellevue) participated in a "Low Waste Lunch Day" as part of a PTA-sponsored Wellness Week. Students who bring lunch had an opportunity to purchase a waste-free lunch kit. The kits, funded through a King County Green Team mini-grant, consisted of reusable lunch containers packaged in a litter bag with waste-free tips, recipes, and nutritional information targeted to elementary students. Students pledged to use the kit regularly to reduce waste. Students who buy lunch also participated by pledging to reduce waste in other areas. All students who pledged received a recycled pencil from the City of Bellevue and were entered into a contest to receive a waste-free gift basket. The PTA Wellness Committee, led by parent Janette Plunkett, worked with the district lunch coordinator and lunchroom and custodial staff to make this event a success.

Crestwood Defenders of the Planet Test Biodegradable Lunch Trays

Students at Crestwood Elementary, under the guidance of advisor Wendy Shol, presented a proposal to the Kent School Board and received permission to test biodegradable lunch trays made out of corn sugar or potatoes. The lunch trays will be composted in their big composter Earth Tub bEartha. Students plan to use the compost and sell it as bEartha Dirt. In another project, students are also decoupageing old cans with magazines and making planters for seeds. They also have recycled enough ink cartridges to earn two new cartridges and a digital camera. To check out these and their many other environmental projects, visit their website at <http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/KSD/CW/DOP.htm>

Rose Hill Junior High Committee Promotes Recycling

The Recycle Committee, initiated by band teacher Angie Laulainen, has led the way to get students recycling at Rose Hill Junior High (Lake Washington). With assistance from King County, the committee has expanded the school program to include cans and bottles. Committee members have labeled containers, made presentations, posters and schoolwide announcements on recycling, and organized contests to recognize classrooms that recycle the most and have the least amount of contaminants. In addition to improving school recycling, these students have earned about team work and promotion.



April 2005

King County Solid Waste Division s School Recycling Program

Earth Day Activities

Building Community—Healing the Planet April 22-24, 2005

The Northwest Sustainability Conference in Seattle is intended for anyone interested in creating a more ecologically sustainable world. Sessions will be facilitated by regional experts emphasizing "everyday sustainability," as well as best practices for businesses, agencies and industry and practical solutions for creating an ecologically sustainable society in the Pacific Northwest. For more information or to register for one or all three days, visit http://www.nweec.org/schedule_sust400a_04-05.htm or contact Rachel Smith at 206-762-1976.

Earth Day Network

For information on this year's 35th Anniversary of Earth Day on Friday, April 22, 2005, visit www.earthday.net. Find information about this year's theme,

Protect Our Children and Our Future, as well as ideas on how to participate.

Wetlands Workshop April 29, 2005

Environmental Concern and The Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (FISH) are presenting a one-day workshop to provide teachers with hands-on information to begin a schoolyard wetland habitat project. This workshop includes the POW!: The Planning of Wetlands publication, which includes hands-on, creative activities and is correlated to state science standards. Leave this one-day workshop with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to plan and build a schoolyard wetland habitat and integrate wetlands across the curriculum.

Scholarships are available. For more information, contact Suzanne Greene, wow@wetland.org or 410-745-9620.

King County Education Programs/Materials Available

King County and the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program offer a variety of education programs and materials for schools. While classroom presentations on water resources have been discontinued, the Wheels to Water Free Bus program, and classroom presentations from the Household Hazardous Waste and the Waste Reduction and Recycling program are still available. Downloadable classroom activities also can be found. Visit <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/topics/learning/LRNtop.htm> for a list of programs, resources, and examples of school and classroom activities

For more details on these and other programs, visit <http://dnr.metro.gov/swd/schoolpr/schoolpg.htm>



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